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AUTHOR Esche, Jeanne; Griffin, Carol
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ABSTRACT

The handbook for parents of deaf blind children describes practical techniques of child care for such activities as sitting, standing, walking, sleeping, washing, eating, dressing, toilet training, disciplining, and playing. For instance, it is explained that some visually handicapped children acquire mannerisms in their early years because they do not have the variety of activities to exercise their muscles that other children have. Various stimulations are suggested as means of distracting a baby's attention from habitual behavior. Techniques for strengthening confidence for walking are said to include allowing the child to use a rope or a stick as a guide initially and tying a string to favorite playthings. It is noted that deaf blind children are rarely totally deaf and totally blind and, consequently, that it is important to provide the child with speech, language, and auditory experiences. (GW)

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A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS OF DEAF-BLIND CHILDREN

EC 050 088E

Department of Education
Michigan School for the Blind
Lansing, Michigan

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Jeanne Esche
Carol Griffin

Department of Education
Michigan School for the Blind
Instructional Materials Development Center

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FORWARD

Many parents in Michigan and throughout our country have had much concern about their rubella babies. We at the Michigan School for the Blind share this concern with parents, health personnel and educators. Because of our interest in these children and to alleviate the anxiety of their parents we have been trying to become involved by making home visitations and by scheduling parent institutes to give information and suggestions. In order to be of more substantial assistance this booklet has brought together answers to many parent and family questions. It is our hope that by using these suggestions you will feel more confident in assisting with the growth and development of your deaf-blind child.

Margret S. Polzien
Principal

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Dear Parents,

The Michigan School for the Blind has been serving comparatively small numbers of visually and auditorially handicapped children since 1949. However, the rubella epedemic of 1964-65 rapidly increased the enrollment and demands of the deaf-blind department. Many parents have asked for suggestions or a guide to help them understand the needs of a handicapped child. This pamphlet then is to give you suggestions and ideas about the ways you can help your child develop and prepare for school. It will also acquaint you with the Michigan School for the Blind and the services offered to you and your child.

Your baby and pre-schooler will need special work, encouragement, more time to develop and a great deal of love. These suggestions should be used only as a guide - you will find; the need to adapt them to your own very particular child. Common sense is the best guide you can have. Don't be afraid to follow it. Each family should interpret and use the advice given here to the best advantage of its own deaf-blind child.

Helping Your Baby Become Aware of His World

The acceptance and love you give him as a baby will influence his entire life. Baby needs extra patting, cuddling and attention so he will not become accustomed to a lonely world. With limited vision and hearing, he needs your touch to let him know someone is there.

Hold his head close to your chest - sing, hum and talk. Try feeling your own chest as you speak, notice the vibration? Your baby will enjoy this. Talk close to his ear or with your mouth on his head or face. Of course, he may not be able to hear you, but keep it up just as if he were hearing you. Make a special effort whenever he is awake.

When you hold him, his hands and your face are very close, let him put his hands on your lips, cheeks or throat. Again he will be getting more vibration and also movement. This will be his way of getting acquainted with you and loving you. Fathers must participate just as actively as mothers!.

A Good Rule: Talk, sing, hum, touch and cuddle frequently. Don't let him be alone too long.

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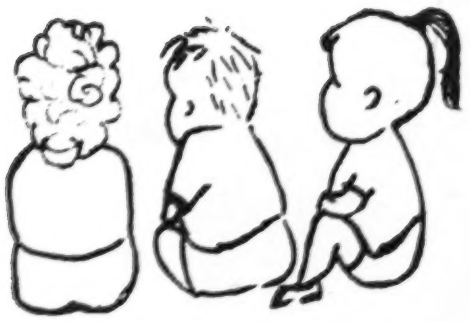
Your Child

Deaf-blind children rarely are totally deaf and totally blind, there is probably some degree of hearing or some amount of vision. The term "deaf-blind" merely groups children who have some problem with both senses. These senses, no matter how slight can work to help the child. Here the similarity of the children ends. Your child will be completely different from any other, your home is different, brothers and sisters are different, your own personalities are different, thus your child will develop differently from any other.

A Good Rule: Your child is an individual, he will not develop or do the same things as another deaf-blind child of the same age. They cannot be compared.



Mannerisms

Some visually handicapped children acquire mannerisms in their early years. One, is the extreme fascination of looking at bright lights from such sources as the sun, reflecting metal, very bright objects or lamps. Others, include moving fingers in front of the face, standing with the head on the floor, poking the eyes, rolling the head or swaying the body. You probably wonder why they do this.

These children do not have the variety of activities to exercise their muscles that other children have. They are not motivated to run to the next room to get a ball or pull themselves up to reach for something on the table or go to the window to see what made the loud noise. Body movements are enjoyable and soothing. However, this may be the beginning of withdrawing from the world they do not understand.

There are steps you can take to prevent these undesirable actions from becoming habits. Distract him with a toy, a cracker or a change in position. Try to get him interested in something that will occupy his hands. A child may be sitting by a window, not in direct sunlight, but in a short time the sun will be shinning directly into his face - something he may greatly enjoy. A change of position will renew his interest in the immediate surroundings.

Use various stimulations which will attract the baby's attention. Remember, it is much easier to stop mannerisms early, before they develop into strong habits.

A Good Rule: Do something constructive, interesting or distracting. Correct, never punish the child for the mannerisms.

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Early Months

Some babies need encouragment in beginning to reach for objects, especially totally blind infants. Toys on a piece of elastic tied across the crib will be easier to see and reach. Put his hand on each toy. Help him hold it and play with it so he will learn how and want to do it himself. You may have to guide his hand and show him many times. It could be several months before he reaches out himself. Toys that make a noise or have a nice feel to them are more fun. Use toys that are easy to hold and light-weight, also those with gay, bright colors to attract his attention.

When he becomes more active, place him on a firm, flat surface, preferrably the floor. Roll him over so that he will get the feeling of body movement, place his arm and leg over his body in anticipation of turning over. Some babies may need more physical help than others. Have toys near him that he can reach. Place them near his head so that he will be able to see them or close to his hands if he is blind.

Always talk to your baby - when he makes noises, you make noises too - imitate him. Encourage all sounds. Say nonsense syllables such as "ba-ba" and repeat them. Also say, "mama" and "daddy" as much as you can, "here's daddy", "come to mama". Call your baby by name. Have fun with noises - happy actions and sounds go together (Wheeeeeeee and bouncing up and down, Bzzzzzzzzz and tickles). This <u>early</u> association of sounds and actions, sounds and people, sounds and objects will help him understand the meaning of sound when he is older.

<u>A Good Rule</u>: Help him in the early discovery of his new surroundings.

Sitting

Sitting up is a big step for a baby. It opens up many new kinds of activity. There are more toys to play with, he can join the family group, watch what is happening in the house and begin eating like the older people. If your baby does not have the opportunity to observe and listen to household activities, he may not be very interested in sitting up.

Use a firm hand on his back, keeping his legs in front of him, (slightly bent at the knees with the heels almost together). Help him lean a little forward for better balance - not too far or he will topple on his face. Stay with him, supporting him as he sits. Gradually lessen your hold and support as his balance increases.

Firm pillows give a feeling of security. Prop him up at various times throughout the day - don't tire him though. Have something interesting near him so he will want to sit up. Take time to sit with him and play; this will take his mind off the sitting. It will be helpful if Daddy holds him while Mother plays with him from the front and vice versa. This helps Daddy take an active part in the training.

A jumper chair is a great help in strengthening back and leg muscles. Also a bath tub chair or a play table with a chair built into the center gives support. The child does not fear falling and it gives much needed practice in sitting.

A Good Rule: Hold him in a sitting position, prop him up and play with him, give him a favorite toy.

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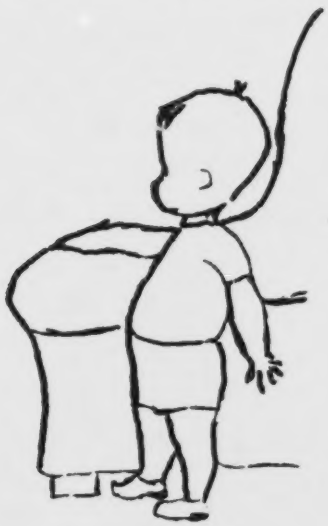
Standing

A little child must be helped to his feet, steadied and reassured that he is alright. If he is sitting up and creeping, he will probably make some attempts to stand. Encourage him, praise him and give a helping hand. Place your hands under his arms to boost him up (don't jerk). Direct his hand to some object he wants. He will soon learn that he can reach more things by standing. Standing up will strengthen the leg and back muscles for walking. He will enjoy this new feeling. Help him every so often throughout the day. One big reminder, never, never leave your child standing alone without support, keep his hand on a solid object until he can stand by himself. Being stranded can be a very upsetting experience and make him hesitate a long time before he tries standing by himself again.

A Good Rule: Keep practicing - sturdy legs and a sure balance will help in future walking.



Walking

How do some children stand up and then start walking while others need a chair or hand for such a long time? Remember these children do not have the vision to insure security of a smooth path nor do they hear the encouraging words of parents. They need a great deal of security and practice to gain their own self confidence.

When they can stand by themselves with good balance, they should be ready for the first few steps. Be sure that he knows you are helping him. Practice in an area where he will not bump into anything. Use the couch or chair to walk around and hold onto.

Follow these same paths until he is confident and walking around them (holding on) by himself.

Stretch out your hand so your finger tips brush his - encourage him to come to you for two or three steps - no more. Lengthen the distance slowly until he is actually walking.

If a child is capable of walking by himself but lacks the confidence, here are some suggestions that have worked.

a. Stand in back of the child. Put one or two finders under each arm and walk with him, supporting him under the arms. Lessen your support and slowly pull your fingers out until he is walking by himself.
b. Attach a rope to two objects. The rope should be about as high as the child's waist from the ground. Let him use this as a guide and for balance.
c. Use a stick (short piece of broom handle, yard stick etc.) about twelve to fifteen inches long. You hold one end and your child the other. Walk together. When you feel he is gaining confidence, gradually lessen your support. Do not let go too soon or he will not want to hold the stick the next time.

d. Tie a string to a favorite plaything. The child holds the toy and you hold the string. Gradually slaken the string until he is walking by himself. Then let go of the string.

A Good Rule: Daily practice is necessary. Until a child walks, very few new activities can be started.

Sleeping

Some children confuse day and night - they like to be on the go at night and sleep during the day. This can be terribly hard on parents who need their sleep at night. Keep your youngster active throughout the day - if he sleeps too little at night, shorten the day naps or keep him awake all the time. Part of the day and night mix-up could be due to habit - perhaps he is sleeping too long in the morning.

Set a routine for him - up in the morning at the same time - breakfast, lunch and supper at specific times, enough activity throughout the day to get tired and a reasonable hour for bed.

An evening ritual with a quiet time, rocking, soft music, a restful play with Daddy, kisses to everyone and a little cuddling is extremely helpful in preparing for bed. A glass of warm milk may also quiet a restless child.

Waking up in the middle of the night and crying can also be a habit. If you are sure there is nothing wrong with him, let him have a cry - he is probably wanting attention, but the middle of the night is not the time. Some children feel frightened and alone at night - you could leave on a small night light or the door partially open. Sit by his bed for a few minutes. Never take him to bed with you.

A Good Rule: Keep a busy routine during the day, a relaxed atmosphere in the evening and loving firmness at bed time.

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Washing

Children will enjoy washing if they are well acquainted with water. Let them have lots of water play - fill the bathroom or kitchen sink when you will be fairly close to watch the action. Have a stool to stand on so he will not have an awkward reach to the sink. Show him the soap (colored, floating soap) and let him play with it. Don't worry about the wet floor. Show him how to fill the bowl and empty the water. Show him where the soap is and how to use it, move his hands and arms so he will get the idea. Stand behind him to help. It is much better if one hook or towel rack is low enough for him to reach by himself.

He will not be able to turn the faucets until he is older and stronger, but show them to him. Keep his hand on them while you turn. Help him to become aware of how everything works. When he does show some independence in rubbing his hands together or reaching for the faucet or soap, praise him, pat him, let him know you are happy. Let him take an active part everytime he needs to wash his hands or is in the bath.

Again, begin early in this training - a child usually accepts the responsibility of doing things for himself when he has consistantly followed the same routine and knows what is expected.

A Good Rule: Let your child find out water is fun. Encourage water play in the sink or bath tub, wading, swimming, splashing, kicking.

Eating

It is most important to start a child on solid foods while they are young. Naturally, they will like the bottle and baby foods, but they must learn to like the taste of other foods too. The longer the baby foods and bottle continue, the harder it will be to make the switch. Some four and five year old children are so set in their eating habits that regular table food is unacceptable to them.

When you begin finger foods, use baby cookies or crackers. Help him hold it and put it in his mouth. He may spit it out - but keep giving it to him again and again. You could try dipping the cracker in milk or juice, so part of it would be soft. Then, when he likes the taste, he would be more willing to accept the hard part.

Small pieces of food that melt quickly in the mouth or the small pieces of sugar coated cereals are good. See that the pieces are small enough so he does not choke. If he begins accepting these things when he is young, your problems will be greatly lessened.

Begin using a glass for milk, juice or water. If a baby is thirsty, he will not object to this new method of drinking. Be sure the glass is firm, so it will not crumple up as a paper cup does and that it is plastic so it will not break or crack. Introduce the glass when you are sure the baby likes what he is drinking. Help him hold it by putting your hands over his. After a while, gradually lessen your hold on the glass, let him raise it to his mouth himself with only your guidance in moving his arm. Always set the glass in the same place so he will become used to the position of it on the tray or table.

Solid, table foods can be another hurdle for the child. You could begin with very soft, creamy foods such as mashed potatoes, mashed vegetables, custards and of course, cooked cereals. Try a little piece of meat, such as hamburger in little balls, or put the balls inside something he likes. The main idea is to develop his taste for a variety of foods and a desire to eat. He may want to use his fingers while eating. This is fine, but don't let him continue eating, all the time and everything with his fingers.

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Some children have trouble learning to chew. Let him watch you chew. Put his hand on your face so he can feel the motion of your jaw. If he does not resist too much, move his jaw up and down, so he will understand the motion. Do not use sharp brittle, things such as potato chips, or pop corn for teaching your child how to chew.

Begin using a spoon with the baby foods. Let him handle the spoon, look at it or taste it. When he shows his own desire to hold it at meal time, let him put his hand on it - under your own. It is a good idea to help him learn how to use a spoon when he is first hungry at the beginning of the meal. It is well to have him eat a little ahead of everyone else. You cannot help him to eat, serving the meal, care for the rest of the family, and enjoy your meal all at the same time. When you are showing your child how to bring the spoon up to his mouth, stand behind him. This is a more natural position for him as the food comes toward him from the plate and not from somewhere in front of him. At first, always make sure he gets some food on the spoon so he does not become discouraged. Let him be messy in his own attempts. Keep up his enthusiasm for using a spoon and praise him when he even attempts to get something on it and bring it to his mouth.

A Good Rule: Begin early, be consistant in your practice and don't try to force too much food at one time.

Dressing

Helping your child learn about his clothes takes a lot of time and effort. Be sure to allow yourself enough time so you can show him how to do it slowly and calmly. It will not help if you are in a hurry. When he is beginning to get the idea, or even trying, show your approval with hugs, kisses and smiles. Put his hands on your face while you say, "Yes", "That's good", "Good boy". Don't become irritated with his slowness and disinterest, children respond to praise much better than scolding.

Encourage him to help in the very beginning. As soon as he can stand, show him how to lift his leg to put on a pair of pants. Tap his leg each time to remind him to raise it. In the same way, he should learn to stretch out his arm when putting it through a sleeve.

It is easier for a child to learn how to undress first, dressing is much more difficult. He can learn to take off his shoes, this is not hard. Then the socks, show him how to put his thumb in the back, above the heel and push down, then pull it off by the toe. Go over it many times. Show him how to pull down his pants. Take his hands in yours, hook his thumbs in the elastic waistband and push down. Stand behind him so it is a natural as possible.

Stress only one skill at a time (pulling up his pants, etc.) when this is mastered go on to another skill, but be sure the child always does the mastered skill himself, each time.

Children cannot tie shoes, or button until their fingers are nimble enough for the job. However, they should be aware of the buttons, the holes on the other side and how the buttons go through. Large buttons are much easier to manipulate and the hole should be large enough so the button will slide through easily.

Many children have difficulty learning how to put on a sweater or jacket. Sometimes it is easier to lay the jacket or sweater out - upside down, he puts his arms through the sleeves and then flips the garment over his head - it falls into place without the long search for the top or the armhole.

Your child should watch other children dressing too, this will give him some idea of the social acceptance and the feeling that everyone does it. Have clothes that are put on easily (pants with no zipper or buttons are good for the first attempts - also shirts that are easily slipped on). Always try to have him help in a certain routine - before and after potty, naps and bedtime.

A Good Rule: Take your time - show slowly and carefully so your effort will be worthwhile.

Toilet Training

Children are toilet trained at different ages - a child who is not quite ready, can't be forced. These children are not easily trained and may resist toilet training. However, the child's handicap is no excuse for not trying. The deaf-blind child can be toilet trained if you are consistent, optimistic and patient.

You have to keep trying even though he may not like sitting on a potty. A small potty on the floor is much better. His feet are on something familiar and solid. A regular toilet may give a "suspended in air" feeling and be quite frightening to him.

Put your child on the potty (in the bathroom) regularily for about 10 minutes, not any longer or he will forget why he is there. It may help him to sit quietly if he has a small toy to play with - tie it on the potty so he will not have to get up if he drops it.

It is always better to stay in the bathroom with him, then you will know when to take him off and reward him for being a "good boy". When you show him how pleased you are and take him off the potty as soon as something happens, he will eventually realize what is expected. Most children develop a pattern, so plan "potty time" around his own schedule. Later when you are catching him, training pants may be more comfortable. They are not so heavy or awkward for a child learning to walk freely. Rubber pants can be used over the training pants to protect the clothes.

Do not show anger or disappointment when nothing happens, just shrug it off and hope for better luck next time.

Change wet pants in the bathroom so that all parts of this activity will be connected with the bathroom. Don't confuse the purpose of toilet training with other activities, such as eating a cookie or having something to drink while on the potty. Some sign, gesture, or word can be given before putting him on the potty. Hopefully, he will connect the sign with the action.

Let him watch other members of the family use the toilet so he will see that everyone does this. Also keep him dry to show him how much more comfortable this feeling is.

A Good Rule: All toilet training should be done in the bathroom - candy, suckers or other distracting foodstuff should not be allowed during this time.

Like other children, it is most important that the deaf-blind child receives discipline too. Discipline is not punishment. It is teaching right from wrong and socially accepted behavior. Don't pamper him. His handicap does not give him the right to have his own way all the time. You must be firm from the beginning. Set reasonable rules and limits and then stick to them. It is very important that you are consistent. When you say "No", let him know that you mean it and crying or tantrums will not change your mind.

The other children in the family could build up great resentment if the handicapped child always got his way and has the best and the most of everything. He should be treated the same as all the others and the rules must apply to him too. Be sure your family understands the need for discipline - many times, brothers or sisters tend to help and protect too much. Both parents need to agree on how they will handle their child. It doesn't take any child long to find out that he can play one against the other. Parents can avoid possible arguments if they are both in agreement about the child's discipline.

A Good Rule: Decide reasonable limits for your child and stick with them - this includes the whole family.

Speech and Language

When a child can not hear speech, he cannot be expected to repeat sounds or words. With some hearing, he may imitate sounds that he does hear. Encourage him to "babble" (make sounds). If you imitate these noises and encourage him to keep trying it will increase his awareness of sounds. Don't worry about the lack of speech, your concern is to make him aware of and interested in his surroundings and the vibrations of sound.

Give him as much vibration as possible. Let him feel the vacuum cleaner, or other household equipment. Talk to him with his hands on your face. Hold him on your lap while you are talking to other people. Sing and hum to him. The more chances he has to listen to this, the more familiar he will become to the process of speech.

Talk to your child just as you would to any other child Talk normally, but clearly and distinctly. Get down to his level and try to get his attention. Make sure the light is shining on your face and not in his eyes. Talk in short, clear sentences, never baby talk. Talk about anything that would interest him. Use familiar expressions over and over again. Here are some examples of helpful expressions:*

Hi	Let's go outside	Let's eat
Good	Goodnight	Ouch
It's time to get up	Open the door	Sit down
Put on your_____	Let's go to the bathroom	Stand up
It's time to eat	Wash your hands	Stop it
Give Daddy a kiss	Turn on the water	Hurry up
Time for your bath	Time for bed	Let's go
Wash your hands	Here comes Daddy	

<u>A Good Rule</u>: Keep Talking!!!

* Tracy, S. John <u>Tracy Clinic Correspondence Course</u>, Los Angeles, Calif. 1968

Auditory Experiences

Expose your child to as many hearing and listening experiences as possible. It is very important that you help him become aware of sound. Let him play with toys that make noise such as a drum, tamborine or bells. Turn up the record player or radio and listen to music. Sit with him next to the record player and show him how to beat the drum to the rhythm. Use other rhythmical toys like a bell or cymbals with the music. Show him a big whistle and blow it for him. See if he can do it. Make noise behind him, bang pans together, slam a door, drop something on the floor, etc. Direct his attention to where the noise came from and then do it again with him watching.

Let him play with toys that make a sound when he touches them. Toys that move and make sounds are good. These are interesting to him. If at first, he is frightened by the noise he hears, stay with him for reassurance and let him listen again. Make these experiences meaningful to him, not just more sound he doesn't understand. Help him realize that different things do make a noise and we all hear them.

He must connect something concrete with the sounds he hears in order to think they are important enough to notice. When you show him a certain sound, do not make it so long that he tends to shut out the noise and misunderstands what you are showing him. Make each burst of sound short, so his attention is caught and then show him the object that made the noise.

<u>A Good Rule</u>: Sounds are important - keep your child aware of them and what they mean

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Play and Toys

It may be a while before your child learns how to play. You must show him how each toy works and give him a variety of toys to choose from. They should be simple to operate, yet have some challenge for the child. Give him only one or two toys to play with at a time. If he discards a toy at first, show it to him again in a few weeks. Some children are not interested in the toys that are sold in the stores; something found around the house could be much more interesting and fun. A toy is anything your child enjoys playing with. Let him experiment at his will with toys. You should stop the play when it gets out of hand or destructive.

Below are some toys that your child may like:

- keys on a ring
- nested boxes
- aluminum pie plate and spoon
- wooden mixing spoons
- wooden clothes pins
- crumply paper
- bean bags
- modeling clay (very soft)
- baking dough
- large beads
- wrist bells
- pans
- plastic lids
- hot pads
- paper cartons
- drum
- squeaky rubber toys
- push or pull toys
- a dangling toy to reach up for

Let him play outside with:

- a swing
- sandbox with pail and spoon
- tricycle
- wagon
- merry-go-round
- large inner tube to bounce or roll
- a doll buggie
- small wading pool (stay with him)
- slide
- climbing bars
- snow play

<u>A Good Rule</u>: Show him first how to play with a toy but let him make up new ways to use it.

If glasses or a hearing aid or both are prescribed for your child, by all means make sure he wears them. This is most important for him even though it may mean extra work for you. You may be putting earmolds back in the ear and glasses on many times a day. They are so important to the child though, that it must be done!

At first, these are strange objects to your child and he may not like them. They could annoy him, so you will have to slowly build up his tolerance. Try wearing them for just a little while each morning and afternoon, as he gets used to the aids, increase the time. Perhaps you could try just one aid at a time rather than both glasses and the hearing aid. When he is used to them, try both of them together. He will want to wear them for the increased hearing and vision he receives, just don't force them too much in the beginning. If the hearing aid is new, you could try just the mold in his ear so that he can become accustomed to the feel of it.

Be on the alert for signs of irritation. Does he cry constantly? Does he appear to be in pain? Or perhaps, he never seems to get used to them. You should have the doctor check him again. The earmolds may be too large or too small. Perhaps the glasses are too tight or the bows are too short. If his glasses fall off, or he pulls them off, try attaching some elastic (not tight) to each bow. Some of his not wanting them could be stubborness on his part. If you feel it is, be firm and let him know that you mean business and that he must wear these aids.

A Good Rule: Keep the aids where they belong - on the child. Keep them clean and repaired when needed.

Parents

We have stressed the amount of time and the extra attention your child must have and needs. This is true, but think too what you need to be happy, to cope with the daily problems and to accept your child with love and understanding. Admit to yourself, grandparents, neighbors, or people you meet that your child is handicapped. There are some things he can't do yet, admit them but don't feel ashamed of them. His handicap is there, you are concerned and doing everything you can to help. Remarks that some people make are unkind but there is nothing you can do about them so learn to ignore them. Often other people feel uneasy when they meet a handicapped child and do not know what to say or do, so their remarks are not always a result of rudeness.

You don't need to rush to your child everytime he is bumped or falls down. He must learn to stand on his own two feet and sometimes you must just sit back and watch him struggle.

We all become exhausted, tired and annoyed at the simple things, especially at the end of a hard day. Accept these feelings - put everyone to bed early and get some rest yourself. The essential idea is that you don't hate yourself the next day for putting them to bed early. Try to be consistant in your demands so all the children know what to expect - they will know that you still love them, even if you are very angry at the moment. Show your love through your time, actions and touch.

Be enthusiastic, get excited about the smallest accomplishment. Make life exciting for your child and it will rub off on all the family. You must remember to be practical with your attention to your child. You do not need to center your life around him. He will demand and need more of your time than other children, but you must also live your own life.

A Good Rule: Let all members of the family help so he becomes familiar with everyone.

Parent Institutes are held each year for the parents of deaf-blind children. The children are observed and supervised by members of the teaching staff while the parents attend discussion groups, lectures and demonstrations. All parents of Michigan and the regional states are invited to these meetings at the Michigan School for the Blind. If you have not contacted the school about your child or do not receive a notice concerning the Institutes, write to the school for information.

The school also sponsors a summer program for deaf-blind children and their families. It follows the same pattern as the School Year Institute but in much greater detail. Parents are shown methods of working with their child at home and the child becomes somewhat acquainted with other people and the classroom before entering school.

Parents are always welcome to visit the department or to seek any help they might need. Administration and staff encourage early correspondence and participation for the benefit of the children.

Address all inquiries to: Michigan School for the Blind
Deaf-Blind Department
715 W. Willow
Lansing, Michigan 48906